

ROLLING THUNDER

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, each Memorial Day, families all over the nation plan their weekend barbecues and look forward to enjoying a long weekend. But despite the festivities, many of these folks don't remember why we have the day off of work, and why we celebrate this national holiday.

But for the members of Rolling Thunder, in Houston, Texas, there is no question. Each year, they join together to help remind Americans across the nation of just why it is that we celebrate Memorial Day.

Rolling Thunder is a group of patriots who have made it their mission to honor our military heroes by bringing awareness through a motorcycle demonstration in Washington, D.C. While many members are veterans, not all are; some are just patriotic Americans who wish to do their part. They unite together to demand accountability for our POWs and MIAs to be identified and brought home.

In 1987, a group of Vietnam Veterans gathered together to discuss the thousands of reported sightings of Americans still living in captivity. They were disturbed by the neglect from our government. So, they decided to do something to force the government and media to acknowledge the horrific abandonment of our men and women overseas. After much brainstorming, the veterans came up with a unique idea. They began reaching out to family, friends, fellow veterans, and advocates to assemble a group of patriots willing to stand up for our soldiers.

In 1988, on Memorial Day, 2,500 men and women rode to our Nation's Capital on their motorcycles. Decked out in leather, wearing shades and bandanas, waving Old Glory, and riding 500 plus pounds of steel, they were a terrifying but inspiring bunch. The sound of over a thousand bikes riding in unison reminded many of the bombing campaign against North Vietnam dubbed Operation Rolling Thunder. Very powerful. Since then, that small group of veterans became known as Rolling Thunder. They are right thinking Americans with big hearts.

The number of riders has increased every year, and now nearly 900,000 members belong to the Rolling Thunder. There are currently 90 chapters throughout 32 states. Two of those chapters are back home in my great city—Houston, Texas. It's hard to find a more patriotic state than Texas. With 8 out of 10 Texans enlisting to serve our nation, it's not a surprise that Texans are joining the "Ride for Freedom" this year.

This year, like every year, on Memorial Day, Rolling Thunder chapters join together and ride to our Nation's Capital. These demonstrations are known as the "Ride for Freedom". This year, they celebrated the 31st Ride for Freedom. The ride begins at the Pentagon on Memorial Day. At noon the riders, all at once, start their motorcycles and begin the ride to The Wall to show their continued support for our missing and fallen soldiers. They pay their respects.

Although the group may have started to bring attention to our POWs/MIAs from Vietnam, they want to make sure all soldiers are

remembered. Today, the organization has branched out to include all wars and recognize that we still have an accumulated estimate of 86,788 unaccounted United States veterans.

Mr. Speaker, Rolling Thunder rides for our soldiers whose lives were given in pursuit of a great cause, American Freedom. I am proud to recognize these angels on bikes with hearts bigger than Texas. They make a difference and represent all that is right and good in America.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO SHEYANN WEBB
CHRISTBURG

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sheyann Webb Christburg, a leader in the American Voting Rights Movement. A trailblazer in every sense of the word, Sheyann was only eight years old when she dared to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma on Bloody Sunday. She courageously participated in the March from Selma to Montgomery which led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Today, we pay tribute to Sheyann as one of the youngest foot soldiers for justice.

Sheyann was born in Selma, Alabama, in 1956 to parents John and Betty Webb as one of eight children. Growing up in public housing, she attended a segregated public school. As Sheyann walked to her third grade class one morning in January 1965, she stumbled across a meeting at Brown Chapel AME Church. There, she saw an uncommon sight for Alabama in the 1960s—both black and white people congregated together outside of the church. Noticing how powerful the moment was and never one to shy away, a curious Sheyann stepped inside to find Dr. Martin Luther King's aide Hosea Williams speaking to the crowd. Williams' words instantly caught her attention: "If you can't vote, then you're not free, and if you ain't free, children, then you're a slave".

Sheyann's participation in the mass meetings were not free from criticism. Upon returning to school, she was reprimanded for being late and attending potentially dangerous meetings. The Birmingham Church bombing had just taken place a few years prior, and her parents were worried that she would be a target for violence. Being involved in the Voting Rights Movement was dangerous, as it could jeopardize her parents' jobs or get them kicked out of public housing. But that did not stop her, Sheyann was determined to blaze her own trail towards freedom.

For her 9th birthday, Sheyann asked her parents to register to vote and stood in line with them at the local Dallas County courthouse for an entire day before they were registered. Sheyann was not deterred by her teachers either. Despite their warnings, she continued to skip class becoming the only child to regularly attend the mass meetings at Brown Chapel.

Sheyann was often accompanied to the after-school meetings by her schoolmate friend Rachel West. The two girls became particularly close with Dr. King himself. "What do

you want?", he would often ask the girls. "Freedom!" They would yell back, going back and forth louder and louder until they would all collapse with laughter. "Do you young ladies have your marching shoes on?", he would ask them. Sheyann always had her marching shoes on.

On March 7, 1965, Sheyann marched with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on what later became known as Bloody Sunday. She was beaten with billy clubs and sprayed with tear gas. Despite being terrified by the violence that erupted, she was determined to continue to march. Sheyann kept attending mass meetings at Brown Chapel AME Church and marched again with SCLC towards Montgomery on March 21, 1965. Her enthusiasm was arguably too much even for Dr. King, who told her she did not have to march all the way to Montgomery and had her picked up by a van and driven back to Selma.

Sheyann's activism continued long after the marches. In junior high school, she became one of the first black students to integrate into an all-white school in Selma. She was pushed down stairs, called bad names, and was suspended from school—all while receiving no support from the administration. But Sheyann remained unbought and unbossed in her activism throughout her life, graduating from Tuskegee Institute in 1979.

Today, Sheyann continues her outreach and civic engagement through her company, KEEP Productions Youth Development Mentoring and Modeling Program, where she works with youth ages two to eighteen to help them blaze their own trails to success. Because Sheyann knows firsthand how impactful childhood opportunities can be, her program assists youth in helping them build self-esteem, confidence, and find purpose in their lives. In addition, she also works with youth groups across the State of Alabama to organize development workshops and training programs that help young people obtain the skills they need to succeed.

Sheyann remains vocal about her experiences in the Voting Rights Movement, writing the book 'Selma, Lord, Selma' which was eventually turned into a movie. She speaks to numerous religious, community, and educational institutions throughout the world and regularly appears on national talk shows.

On a personal note, I am privileged to have known Sheyann Webb Christburg all my life as a native daughter of Selma and my former babysitter. Sheyann has made such an incredible imprint on my life as a mentor, confidante and friend. To know Sheyann, is to be inspired by Sheyann. Her courage in the face of adversity, her moral compass on issues of social justice and her heart of gold are her trademark and standard bearers. I know that it is because of her influence on my life that I am Alabama's first Black Congresswoman. To say thank you doesn't seem an adequate reflection of my sincere gratitude.

On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the tremendous accomplishments and extraordinary contributions of Sheyann Webb Christburg—an American icon of the Voting Rights Movement. We pay tribute to her bravery as a trailblazer and honor her continued efforts to motivate and uplift up children across the State of Alabama and this nation.

RECOGNITION OF THE NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA POWER AGENCY'S
50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise today to commend the Northern California Power Agency, also known as NCPA, on its 50th anniversary. NCPA was established in 1968 by a consortium of locally owned electric utilities to make joint investments in energy resources that would ensure an affordable, reliable, and clean supply of electricity for customers in its member communities. By banding together, these local consumer-owned utilities, including several in my District, achieved economies of scale necessary to build generation and collectively face the challenges of an evolving electric utility industry.

The Agency's mission is to provide members with reliable, efficient, and cost-effective wholesale power, energy-related services, and advocacy on behalf of public power consumers through joint action. I can tell you, through my decades of dealing with NCPA during my tenure in Congress as well as the California legislature, that the Agency meets that mission with flying colors.

NCPA has been a pioneer in implementing innovative technologies that benefit the environment, as highlighted through its construction of both the world's first integrated wastewater geothermal system, which greatly prolongs the life of invaluable geothermal renewable resources, and the nation's first "fast start" combined-cycle natural gas turbines. The Agency also owns and operates nearly 260 megawatts of in-state, hydropower resources that generate carbon-free electricity for Californians while also providing outdoor recreation benefits. NCPA also regularly represents its members' interests in issues related to the Central Valley Project.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending and congratulating NCPA on 50 years of invaluable service to its public power members and their respective communities, the State of California, and the county.

MICHAEL CAMELO, JR.

HON. FRANCIS ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael Camelo, Jr. Camelo, a second-generation Cape Coral firefighter, who passed away on May 29th at the age of 37.

Engineer Camelo joined the department in 2006 and served honorably in several critically important positions including paramedic, hazardous materials technician, public safety boat operator, and as member of the Firefighter Survival and Rapid Intervention team.

Mr. Camelo is survived by his two children, Anna, 5, and Michael Camelo III, 3. Both of these young children will forever be a part of the Cape Coral firefighter family that Michael cared about so deeply throughout his entire life.

I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the family of Mr. Michael Camelo, Jr. This is an immense loss to the Cape Coral Fire Department and to the city. Although short in years, Michael's life was filled with great accomplishment and a spirit of service to others—he and his family will be in my prayers, and the prayers of our community.

TRIBUTE TO GRACE McDONALD

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Grace McDonald of Winterset High School. Grace was recently honored for outstanding academic achievement at the Sixteenth Annual Governor's Scholar Recognition on April 29, 2018.

This statewide program is sponsored by the Iowa Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and the Iowa Farm Bureau. Each Iowa high school was invited to select a senior with the highest academic ranking. Not only are they academically gifted, but the selected students are often the youth who are successful in extra-curricular activities and community endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Grace in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud her for utilizing her talents to reach her goals. I invite my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Grace on receiving this esteemed designation, and wishing her the best of luck in all her future endeavors.

RICHMOND STUDENTS EARN GOLD
SEAL AWARDS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Favour Umeakuana and Sonali Puri of Richmond, TX for both earning a Gold Seal at the 2018 State Visual Arts Scholastic Event contest.

The State Visual Arts Scholastic Event, or "VASE", is part of the Texas Art Education Association and awards Gold Seals to its most talented high school artists. It is the highest honor a Texas high school art student can obtain. Favour, a freshman at George Ranch High School, and Sonali, a junior at Foster High School, were two of the 150 students awarded a Gold Seal out of over 35,000 entries. These students have demonstrated incredible talent and are thought of by their classmates to be truly unique. Favour and Sonali are in elite artistic company and deserve the recognition this award displays.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Favour and Sonali for receiving Gold Seal awards. We look forward to seeing their future artwork.

RECOGNIZING FRANK EMOND

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and pay tribute to a local hero and national treasure who has dedicated his life to humble service; service to his country and service to others. Mr. Emond is a Pearl Harbor survivor and recently celebrated his 100th birthday on May 21, 2018.

The history of the life and work of Frank Emond is nothing short of astounding. Francis "Frank" Emond, originally from Rhode Island, played the French horn in his high school band. After graduating and working for three years, he joined the U.S. Navy in 1938, leaving his home in Rhode Island to serve as a musician.

In the summer of 1941, Mr. Emond was assigned to Pearl Harbor, aboard the battle ship USS *Pennsylvania* with Admiral Kimmel, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet.

On the night of Saturday, December 6, 1941, bands from the *Pennsylvania*, the *California*, and the *Arizona* held a dance band contest on the docks; bragging rights for the winner and great entertainment for the troops and civilians. Mr. Emond's band won the trophy, which they later donated in memory of all 21 *Arizona* band members and 1,100 hands that went down with them.

On the morning of December 7, 1941, "a date", in the words of President Roosevelt, "which will live in infamy", Mr. Emond was playing the French horn with his band mates as they were preparing to play for the morning flag raising.

The ceremony was horrifically interrupted by hundreds of Japanese aircraft dropping bombs and riddling the harbor's battleships with machine gun fire.

The *Pennsylvania* was struck by a bomb, killing 15 and launching men, including Mr. Emond, into a rescue operation. Mr. Emond was trained as a stretcher-bearer and began retrieving the injured and the dead.

Mr. Emond retired from the Navy in 1968 and spent a decade working as a civilian employee at Pensacola Naval Air Station.

To this day, Mr. Emond continues to serve his country and his community. He has been a Red Cross volunteer at Pensacola Naval Hospital for the last 15 years. He works at the hospital's front desk where he frequently brightens the day of many visitors as he greets them and works the switchboard.

Mr. Emond expresses that "time is one of the easiest gifts to give, and is an important one that could change the outcome of somebody's day or maybe even their life." Mr. Emond has certainly given generously of his time and has, no doubt, positively impacted the lives of countless people who are blessed to know and work with him.

Frank Emond's presence and service has been, and will continue to be, an invaluable asset to Northwest Florida. We are proud that he calls our area home and honored that he chooses to spend his time volunteering here.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am humbled and privileged to recognize and honor Frank Emond for his countless contributions and service. I'd like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Emond and his family